



Grant Park Music Festival

Seventy-fifth Season

Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus

Carlos Kalmar, *Principal Conductor*

Christopher Bell, *Chorus Director*

Eighteenth Program: The Dream of Gerontius

Friday, July 31, 2009 at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 1, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

Jay Pritzker Pavilion

GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS

Carlos Kalmar, *Conductor*

Christopher Bell, *Chorus Director*

Allyson McHardy, *Mezzo-Soprano*

John MacMaster, *Tenor*

Paul Whelan, *Bass*

ELGAR *The Dream of Gerontius* for Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor
and Bass Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra, op. 38

Part I

INTERMISSION

Part II

CARLOS KALMAR's biography can be found on page 8.

CHRISTOPHER BELL's biography can be found on page 10.



Mezzo-soprano **ALLYSON MCHARDY**, “a singer of enormous imagination and versatility” (*San Francisco Chronicle*), is in demand for orchestral and opera engagements in Germany, France, Canada, Spain, Italy, Poland and the United States. She has appeared with the Boston Symphony, Edmonton Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, National Arts Centre Orchestra, with Les Violons du Roy and at Tanglewood under conductors including Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Bernard Labadie, Seiji Ozawa and Helmuth Rilling. The Ontario native debuted with the San Francisco Opera as Olga in *Eugene Onegin* and last appeared

there as Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Other recent engagements include the title roles in *L’italiana in Algeri* in Lille, Caen and Amiens, Marchesa Melibea in *Il viaggio a Reims* for the New York City Opera, Flosshilde and Rossweisse (*Ring des Nibelungen*) and Olga in *Eugene Onegin* for the Canadian Opera Company. She appeared with the Toronto Symphony in *MESSIAH* conducted by Noel Edison, in Toulouse as Phèdre in *HIPPOLYTE ET ARICIE* conducted by Emmanuelle Haïm, for Minnesota Opera as Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, with Les Violons du Roy for a Beethoven concert, at the Scotia Festival in Mahler symphony no. 2 and with Vancouver Opera for a reprise of Olga. Future engagements include Szymanowski’s *Stabat Mater*, *Messiah* with Lopez-Coboz, Adalgisa in *Norma*, *Missa Solemnis*, and Jo in Adamo’s *Little Women*. Recordings include the title role in Caldara’s *Clodoveo*, *Re di Francia* for ATMA and the vocal works of Ukrainian composer Mykola Lysenko.

Canadian tenor **JOHN MAC MASTER** is in demand the world over in the dramatic roles of the Italian repertoire (*Otello*, *Pagliacci*, *Calaf/Turandot*, *Manrico/Trovatore*) as well as in the heroic roles of the German repertoire (Tristan, Florestan/*Fidelio*, Bacchus/*Ariadne auf Naxos*, Erik/*Flying Dutchman*). He has performed in leading and title roles with L’Opéra Nationale de Paris, The Metropolitan Opera, SemperOper Dresden, Welsh National Opera on tour throughout the UK; the opera companies of Stuttgart, Frankfurt and Vienna; in Australia and China; across the USA, and with every major Canadian opera company. He



is a frequent guest of symphony orchestras, and has appeared and recorded with the London Symphony (Beethoven Nine-Haitink; *Fidelio*-Colin Davis), Philharmonia Orchestra (London UK, *Glagolitic Mass* -Mackerras), in Barcelona (*Gurrelieder*) and Singapore (Mahler 8), and with orchestras across the USA and Canada. For Opera Australia he has appeared as Cavaradossi/*Tosca*, Prince/*Love for Three Oranges*, and in the Verdi *Requiem*. This season he appeared in the Beethoven Ninth Symphony with the Seattle Symphony; his rôle début in the Albeniz opera *Henry Clifford* for the Music Festival of the Canary Islands; *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Syracuse Symphony and Orchestre Metropolitain Grand du Montréal-Yannick Nézet-Séguin; Verdi’s *Requiem* with Orchestre symphonique de Quebec-Talmi; he returned to Vancouver Opera to sing Herodes in *Salome*. Upcoming engagements include Florestan with the Gergiev Festival in Rotterdam, Beethoven Nine with the Dallas Symphony, Mahler 8 with Ottawa’s National Arts Centre Orchestra—Zukerman and Vancouver Symphony-Tovey as part of the 2010 Winter Olympic celebrations.



In the 2007-08 season, **PAUL WHELAN** returned to English National Opera to sing in the Anthony Minghella production of *Madama Butterfly*, and Raimondo in a new production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Of this performance, George Hall of *The Stage* wrote, “Paul Whelan sang the role magnificently.” He also sang Duke Bluebeard in *Bluebeard’s Castle* with NBR Opera New Zealand and Dvorak *Requiem* with the Gulbenkian orchestra in Lisbon conducted by Gennady Rozhdetsvensky. Mr. Whelan joined the roster of the Metropolitan Opera for the 2008-09 season. In addition, he performed *Messiah* with Omaha

Symphony and Stanford’s *Songs of Fleet* with Ulster Orchestra. Upcoming engagements include a return to the Metropolitan Opera and performances of the role of Alidoro in *La Cenerentola* with the Glyndebourne tour. Additional recent engagements include the Priest and the Angel of Agony in Elgar’s *The Dream of Gerontius* in Berlin, Salisbury and New Zealand, a return to the London Bach choir for *St. Matthew Passion* at the Festival Hall and the world premiere of *Terra Incognita* - a symphonic cantata for bass soloist and choir, written for Mr. Whelan by Gareth Farr and performed by the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Whelan began his career as a baritone and performed with many major companies including Covent Garden, the Netherlands Opera the Metropolitan Opera, the Munich State Opera, Geneva Opera, Paris Opera/Bastille, Teatro Municipal de Santiago di Chile, Scottish Opera, Australian Opera, Montpellier, and Nimes.

THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS FOR MEZZO-SOPRANO, TENOR AND BASS SOLOISTS, CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA (1900)

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

The Dream of Gerontius is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps, organ and strings. The performance time is 100 minutes. This is the first performance of The Dream of Gerontius by the Grant Park Orchestra.



Cardinal John Henry Newman was one of the shaping forces of England’s religious life in the 19th century. Newman was born into a devout Anglican family in London in 1801, studied at Trinity College, Oxford, became a fellow of Oxford’s Oriel College in 1822 and vice principal of Alban Hall in the university’s Merton College in 1825, and was made vicar of St. Mary’s, Oxford in 1828. In 1833, with the theologians John Keble, Richard Hurrell Froude and Edward Pusey, Newman founded the “Oxford Movement,” which sought to deliver Anglicanism from the growing Protestant influence that began with the Reformation and return it to the “High Church” ideals and practices of Roman Catholicism, to which they traced its origin. They codified their views in the ninety *Tracts for the Times*, 24 authored by Newman, that eventually led to such Anglican reforms as increased use of ceremony and ritual in services, establishment of monastic communities, and better educating a clergy that was devoted to the pastoral care of its parishioners. So committed to the re-unification of the divided branches of Christianity was Newman that in 1845, hoping to promote a truly “catholic” — a “universal” — faith, he converted to Roman Catholicism, and the following year was ordained as a priest in Rome. In 1848 in Birmingham, he founded an “Oratory” (an independent Catholic community of secular priests, i.e., obedient to the Church but not formally ordained, who are dedicated to prayer, preaching and the sacraments) and served as rector of the newly founded Catholic University of Ireland (now University College, Dublin) in the early 1850s. Though they excited considerable doctrinal dispute, Newman’s incisive, lucid, tightly reasoned and elegantly expressed writings exerted a profound influence on both of his religions, and helped to



reduce the ancient enmities between Protestants and Catholics in England; in 1879 Pope Leo XIII named him Cardinal-Deacon of the basilica church of San Giorgio al Velabro in Rome. Ill health during the 1880s largely confined Newman to the Oratory at Birmingham, where he died in 1890.

Newman wrote *The Dream of Gerontius* in 1865 as a belated memorial to his fellow Oratorian John Joseph Gordon, who had died at the age of 41 in 1853. The poem describes the last moments of a man's life, the vision of the heaven into which he is transported for his judgment, and his being ushered into Purgatory by angels. Though there are obscure Cornish and Italian saints and a 5th-century king of Devon all called Gerontius, Newman seems to have derived the name for his titular character from, simply, the Greek for "old man." (Compare our modern word "gerontology," i.e., the study of aging and its effects.) *Gerontius* was published in the Catholic periodical *The Month* II and gained an immediate and enduring popularity. (It was the subject of a conference at the University of Illinois as recently as 2000.) Elgar described the character of Gerontius to his publisher, August Jaeger at Novello, as "a man like us, not a Priest or a Saint, but a *sinner*, a repentant one of course but still no end of a *worldly man* in his life." Elgar had been born into a Catholic family near Worcester, just 25 miles south of Birmingham and Newman's Oratory, and he first read *Gerontius* while still a teenager. He had come to value the poem so highly by 1887 that he presented a copy of it to his fiancée, Alice Roberts, to console her on the death of her mother. Father Thomas Knight, who presided at their wedding in May 1889, made the rather curious gift of another copy of this poem about death to the newlyweds at the beginning of their married life.

In November 1898, Elgar was invited to compose a sacred choral work for the October 1900 Triennial Festival in Birmingham, a musical event of sufficient renown that the internationally celebrated Antonín Dvořák had been lured to compose for it both *The Specter's Bride* (1885) and a *Requiem* (1891). (Dvořák was offered *Gerontius* by the festival's directors in 1885 as a subject for another project, but declined it.) Elgar first thought he might do something concerning St. Augustine, but this suggestion was rejected by the organizing committee as "too controversial" (i.e., "too Catholic"). He then considered Judas Iscariot and the Apostles as subjects but laid both aside (the latter idea provided the basis for an oratorio for Birmingham in 1903), so by December 1899, with the premiere only ten months away, he was still without a libretto. He wrote to the directors to resign from the commission, but his new work was to be the centerpiece of the festival and they were loath to give up on it. (There is a strong competitive spirit among the big English choral festivals, and Birmingham did not want to lose face over a canceled premiere.)

George H. Johnstone, chairman of the committee (and a Roman Catholic), was dispatched on New Year's Day 1900 to remedy the situation. Johnstone learned that Elgar had, indeed, been sketching a large choral work during the preceding months, but that the composer considered its subject — *The Dream of Gerontius* — inappropriately sectarian for Birmingham. Johnstone, considering the press of time, did not. Elgar telegraphed Birmingham the next day to re-accept the commission and agree to the financial terms, and a week later he met with Father William Neville, Cardinal Newman's friend and executor at the Birmingham Oratory, to obtain rights for a musical setting of *Gerontius*. Neville granted permission to abridge the text but not to alter any of the remaining lines. Elgar excised about half of Newman's original 900 lines, and the libretto was ready by early February. Composition thereafter proceeded at a furious pace. Sections of the score were sent to Novello beginning in March, and Elgar's copious correspondence with Jaeger during the following months provides one of the most revealing glimpses into the creation of a musical masterpiece that we possess. The complete draft was finished on June 6th ("*Deo gratias*" — "*Thanks be to God*" — Elgar inscribed in his diary that day) and the score was proofed and revised and the performance parts printed by late August. The composer, who turned 43 that summer, knew that what he had done was good — at the end of the manuscript he placed a quotation from John Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*: "This is the best of me ... this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory."

The first performance of *The Dream of Gerontius* was set for 11:30 on the morning of Wednesday, October 3rd; Hans Richter, who had led the sensational premiere of the *Enigma Variations* in London the year before, would conduct. Rehearsals, however, did not begin in earnest until September 12th, when the chorus was still unsettled by the unexpected death four months earlier of its regular director, Swinnerton Heap, and his replacement with the septuagenarian William Stockley, a Birmingham veteran (Elgar had played violin under his direction there in the 1880s) but

by then out of touch with current musical trends. The new work, difficult of execution and more Wagnerian than Handelian in its through-composed structure, was more than chorus and orchestra, burdened by the festival's myriad performing obligations, could master. The soloists were hardly any better. The young Ralph Vaughan Williams, who came to Birmingham expecting a success to equal that of the *Enigma Variations* in London, found that Edward Lloyd sang the title role "like a church anthem, in the correct tenor manner with one foot slightly withdrawn," that the bass, Plunket Greene, had "lost his voice," and that the contralto, Marie Brema, "had none to lose." Not even Richter, one of the finest conductors of his day, could pull things together, and the performance went badly. "Providence denies me a decent hearing of my work," Elgar, deeply disappointed that both his creative work and his Catholic faith had been so poorly represented, lamented to Jaeger. "So I submit — I always said God was against art and I still believe it. Anything obscene or trivial is blessed in this world and has a reward. . . . I have allowed my heart to open once — it is now shut against every religious feeling and every soft, gentle impulse *for ever*." He never completely regained his earlier beliefs, but he did continue to compose, writing the *Cockaigne Overture*, a jovial tonal portrait of London, the following year.

The audience, however, heard something profound in *Gerontius* despite the botched performance, and broke a festival rule against applauding at morning performances by repeatedly calling the composer to the stage. The critics concurred: "I can honestly say that no composition by an Englishman equals it in sheer technique, to say nothing of real poetic feeling" (Edward Baughan, *The Morning Leader*); "I will venture to say that, since the death of Wagner [in 1883], no finer composition has been given to the world" (Vernon Blackburn, *The Pall Mall Gazette*); "*The Dream of Gerontius* advances its composer's claim to rank amongst the musicians of whom the country should be proudest" (Joseph Bennett, *The Daily Telegraph*). Among the other auditors in Birmingham that morning was Julius Butts, conductor of the Lower Rhine Festival in Düsseldorf, who was impressed enough to schedule *Gerontius* for a performance there on December 19, 1901; the response was so positive that he offered it again the following year, when Elgar was called to the stage twenty times and Richard Strauss praised him as "a modern master" at a post-concert banquet. Extended excerpts from *Gerontius* were heard in Worcester, Hanley and Manchester in 1902, the complete work was given in London, Chicago and New York the following year, and it has since resided, with Handel's *Messiah* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* (an 1846 Birmingham Festival commission), on the loftiest plane of the English choral-orchestral repertory.

The Dream of Gerontius is remarkable for the mastery of its orchestration, the euphony and complexity of its choral writing, the flow and dramatic impact of its structure, the sophisticated use of germinal motives throughout the score, and the profound insight with which it treats Cardinal Newman's visionary text. Part I, taken largely intact from the original poem, shows Gerontius at the hour of his death, the prayers of his friends (called "Assistants" in the score), and the consignment of Gerontius' soul to the afterlife by the Priest. Part II, which exists in a different, more luminous sound world, encompasses the arrival of Gerontius' soul into the place of judgment, the Angel's preparing him to stand before God, the demons of hell laying in wait for the unworthy, the praises of God by the choir of Angelicals, the echoes of the voices of Gerontius' earthly friends praying for mercy for him, the blinding moment before the Holy Throne, the song of the Souls in Purgatory, and Gerontius being escorted by an Angel to join them until his sins are expiated and he can enter heaven. "I have not seen or heard anything since [Wagner's 1882] *Parsifal*," wrote Jaeger to Elgar on May 29, 1900, after receiving the close of Part I, "that has stirred me, & stirred me, & spoken to me with the trumpet tongue of genius as has your latest & by far greatest work."

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The Dream of Gerontius
text by Cardinal John Henry Newman

Part I

Gerontius (Tenor)
Assistants (Chorus)
The Priest (Bass)

Orchestral Prelude

Gerontius

Jesu, Maria — I am near to death,
And Thou art calling me; I know it now.
Not by the token of this faltering breath,
This chill at heart, this dampness on my brow —
(Jesu, have mercy! Mary, pray for me!)
'Tis this new feeling, never felt before,
(Be with me, Lord, in my extremity!)
That I am going, that I am no more.
'Tis this strange innermost abandonment,
(Lover of souls! great God! I look to Thee)
This emptying out of each constituent
And natural force, by which I come to be.
Pray for me, O my friends; a visitant
Is knocking his dire summons at my door,
The like of whom, to scare me and to daunt,
Has never, never come to me before;
So pray for me, my friends, who have not strength to pray.

Assistants

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison.
Holy Mary, pray for him.
All holy Angels, pray for him.
Choirs of the righteous, pray for him.
All Apostles, all Evangelists, pray for him.
All holy Disciples of the Lord, pray for him.
All holy Innocents, pray for him.
All holy Martyrs, all holy Confessors,
All holy Hermits, all holy Virgins,
All ye Saints of God, pray for him.

Gerontius

Rouse thee, my fainting soul, and play the man;
And through such waning span
Of life and thought as still has to be trod,
Prepare to meet thy God.
And while the storm of that bewilderment
Is for a season spent,
And, ere afresh the ruin on me fall,
Use well the interval.

Assistants

Be merciful, be gracious; spare him, Lord.
 Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver him.
 From the sins that are past;
 From Thy frown and Thine ire;
 From the perils of dying;
 From any complying
 With sin, or denying
 His God, or relying
 On self, at the last;
 From the nethermost fire;
 From all that is evil;
 From power of the devil;
 Thy servant deliver,
 For once and for ever.

By Thy Birth, and by Thy Cross,
 Rescue him from endless loss;
 By Thy death and burial,
 Save him from a final fall;
 By Thy rising from the tomb,
 By Thy mounting up above,
 By the Spirit's gracious love,
 Save him in the day of doom.

Gerontius

Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
 De profundis oro te,
 Miserere, Judex meus,
 Parce mihi, Domine.
 Firmly I believe and truly
 God is Three, and God is One;
 And I next acknowledge duly
 Manhood taken by the Son.
 And I trust and hope most fully
 In that manhood crucified;
 And each thought and deed unruly
 Do to death, as He has died.
 Simply to His grace and wholly
 Light and life and strength belong,
 And I love, supremely solely,
 Him the holy, Him the strong.
 Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
 De profundis oro te,
 Miserere, Judex meus,
 Parce mihi, Domine.
 And I hold in veneration,
 For the love of Him alone,
 Holy Church, as His creation,
 And her teachings, as His own.
 And I take with joy whatever
 Now besets me, pain or fear,
 And with a strong will I sever



All the ties which bind me here.
 Adoration aye be given,
 With and through the angelic host,
 To the god of earth and heaven,
 Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
 Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
 De profundis oro te,
 Miserere, Judex meus,
 Mortis in discrimine.
 I can no more; for now it comes again,
 That sense of ruin, which is worse than pain,
 That masterful negation and collapse
 Of all that makes me man.
 And, crueller still,
 A fierce and restless fright begins to fill
 The mansion of my soul.
 And, worse and worse,
 Some bodily form of ill
 Floats on the wind, with many a loathsome curse
 Tainting the hallow'd air, and laughs, and flaps
 Its hideous wings,
 And makes me wild with horror and dismay.
 O Jesu, help! pray for me, Mary, pray!
 Some Angel, Jesu! such as came to Thee
 In Thine own agony ...
 Mary, pray for me. Joseph, pray for me.
 Mary, pray for me.

Assistants

Rescue him, O Lord, in this his evil hour,
 As of old so many by Thy gracious power.
 Noe from the waters in a saving home; (Amen)
 Job from all his multiform and fell distress; (Amen)
 Moses from the land of bondage and despair; (Amen)
 David from Goliath and the wrath of Saul; (Amen)
 — So, to show Thy power,
 Rescue this Thy servant in his evil hour.

Gerontius

Novissima hora est; and I fain would sleep.
 The pain has wearied me ... Into Thy hands,
 O Lord, into Thy hands ...

The Priest

Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc mundo!
 Go forth upon thy journey, Christian soul!
 Go from this world! Go, in the Name of God
 The Omnipotent Father, who created thee!
 Go, in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord,
 Son of the living God, who bled for thee!
 Go, in the Name of the Holy Spirit,

Who hath been pour'd out on thee! Go, in the name
 Of Angels and Archangels; in the name
 Of Thrones and Dominations; in the name
 Of Princedoms and of Powers; and in the name
 Of Cherubim and Seraphim, go forth!
 Go, in the name of Patriarchs and Prophets;
 And of Apostles and Evangelists,
 Of Martyrs and Confessors; in the name
 Of holy Monks and Hermits; in the name
 Of holy Virgins; and all Saints of God,
 Both men and women, go! Go on thy course;
 And may thy place today be found in peace,
 And may thy dwelling be the Holy Mount
 Of Sion — through the same, through Christ our Lord.

Part II

Soul of Gerontius (Tenor)
 Angel (Mezzo-Soprano)
 Angel of the Agony (Bass)
 Demons, Angelicals and Souls (Chorus)

Soul of Gerontius

I went to sleep; and now I am refresh'd,
 A strange refreshment: for I feel in me
 An inexpressive lightness, and a sense
 Of freedom, as I were at length myself,
 And ne'er had been before. How still it is!
 I hear no more the busy beat of time,
 No, nor my fluttering breath, nor struggling pulse;
 Nor does one moment differ from the next.
 This silence pours a solitariness
 Into the very essence of my soul;
 And the deep rest, so soothing and so sweet,
 Hath something too of sternness and of pain.
 Another marvel: some one has me fast
 Within his ample palm; A uniform
 And gentle pressure tells me I am not
 Self-moving, but borne forward on my way.
 And hark! I hear a singing; yet in sooth
 I cannot of that music rightly say
 Whether I hear, or touch, or taste the tones.
 Oh, what a heart-subduing melody!

Angel

My work is done,
 My task is o'er,
 And so I come,
 Taking it home,
 For the crown is won,
 Alleluia,
 For evermore.



My Father gave
 In charge to me
 This child of earth
 E'en from its birth,
To serve and save,
 Alleluia,
 And saved is he.
This child of clay
 To me was given,
 To rear and train
 By sorrow and pain
In the narrow way,
 Alleluia,
 From earth to heaven.

Soul

It is a member of that family
Of wondrous beings, who, ere the worlds were made,
Millions of ages back, have stood around
The throne of God.
I will address him. Mighty one, my Lord,
My Guardian Spirit, all hail!

Angel

All hail, my child!
My child and brother, hail! what wouldest thou?

Soul

I would have nothing but to speak with thee
For speaking's sake. I wish to hold with thee
Conscious communion; though I fain would know
A maze of things, were it but meet to ask,
And not a curiousness.

Angel

You cannot now
Cherish a wish which ought not to be wish'd.

Soul

Then I will speak. I ever had believed
That on the moment when the struggling soul
Quitted its mortal case, forthwith it fell
Under the awful Presence of its God,
There to be judged and sent to its own place.
What lets me now from going to my Lord?

Angel

Thou art not let; but with extremest speed
Art hurrying to the Just and Holy Judge.

Soul

Dear Angel, say,
Why have I now no fear at meeting Him?
Along my earthly life, the thought of death
And judgment was to me most terrible.

Angel

It is because
Then thou didst fear, that now thou dost not fear,
Thou hast forestall'd the agony, and so
For thee the bitterness of death is past.
Also, because already in thy soul
The judgment is begun.
A presage falls upon thee, as a ray
Straight from the Judge, expressive of thy lot.
That calm and joy uprising in thy soul
Is first-fruit to thee of thy recompense,
And heaven begun.

Soul

Now that the hour is come, my fear is fled;
And at this balance of my destiny,
Now close upon me, I can forward look
With serenest joy.
But hark! upon my sense
Comes a fierce hubbub, which would make me fear
Could I be frightened.

Angel

We are now arrived
Close on the judgment-court; that sullen howl
Is from the demons who assemble there.
Hungry and wild, to claim their property,
And gather souls for hell. Hist to their cry.

Soul

How sour and how uncouth a dissonance!



Demons

Low-born clods
 Of brute earth,
 They aspire
To become gods,
 By a new birth,
And an extra grace,
 And a score of merits,
 As if aught
Could stand in place
 Of the high thought,
 And the glance of fire
 Of the great spirits,
The powers blest,
 The lords by right,
 The primal owners,
 Of the proud dwelling
 And realm of light —
Dispossess'd,
Aside thrust,
 Chuck'd down
 By the sheer might
 Of a despot's will,
 Of a tyrant's frown,
 Who after expelling
 Their hosts, gave,
 Triumphant still,
And still unjust,
 Each forfeit crown
 To psalm-droners,
 And canting groaners,
 To every slave,
 And pious cheat,
 And crawling knave,
 Who lick'd the dust
 Under his feet.

Angel

It is the restless panting of their being;
Like beasts of prey, who, caged within their bars,
In a deep hideous purring have their life,
And an incessant pacing to and fro.

Demons

The mind bold
 And independent,
 The purpose free,
So we are told,
Must not think
 To have the ascendant.
 What's a saint?

One whose breath
Doth the air taint
Before his death;
A bundle of bones,
Which fools adore,
Ha! ha!

When life is o'er.

Virtue and vice,

A knave's pretence,
'Tis all the same;
Ha! ha!

Dread of hell-fire,
Of the venomous flame,
A coward's plea.

Give him his price,

Saint though he be,
From shrewd good sense
He'll slave for hire;
Ha! ha!

And does but aspire

To the heaven above

With sordid aim,

And not from love.

Ha! ha!

Soul

I see not those false spirits; shall I see
My dearest Master, when I reach His throne?

Angel

Yes — for one moment thou shalt see thy Lord.
One moment; but thou knowest not, my child,
What thou dost ask: that sight of the Most Fair
Will gladden thee, but it will pierce thee too.

Soul

Thou speakest darkly, Angel; and an awe
Falls on me, and a fear lest I be rash.

Angel

There was a mortal, who is now above
In the mid glory: he when near to die,
Was given communion with the Crucified —
Such, that the Master's very wounds were stamp'd
Upon his flesh; and, from the agony
Which thrill'd through body and soul in that embrace,
Learn that the flame of the Everlasting Love
Doth burn ere it transform.



Angel

Hark to those sounds!
They come of tender beings angelical,
Least and most childlike of the sons of God.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!
To us His elder race He gave
To battle and to win,
Without the chastisement of pain,
Without the soil of sin.
The younger son He will'd to be
A marvel in his birth:
Spirit and flesh his parents were;
His home was heaven and earth.
The Eternal bless'd His child, and arm'd,
And sent him hence afar,
To serve as champion in the field
Of elemental war.
To be His Viceroy in the world
Of matter, and of sense;
Upon the frontier, towards the foe,
A resolute defence.

Angel

We now have pass'd the gate, and are within
The House of Judgment.

Soul

The sound is like the rushing of the wind —
The summer wind — among the lofty pines.

Choir of Angelicals

Glory to Him; who evermore
By truth and justice reigns;
Who tears the soul from out its case,
And burns away its stains!

Angel

They sing of thy approaching agony,
Which thou so eagerly didst question of.

Soul

My soul is in my hand: I have no fear —
 But hark! a grand, mysterious harmony:
 It floods me like the deep and solemn sound
 Of many waters.

Angel

And now the threshold, as we traverse it,
 Utters aloud its glad responsive chant.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
 And in the depth be praise:
 In all His words most wonderful;
 Most sure in all His ways!
 O loving wisdom of our God!
 When all was sin and shame,
 A second Adam to the fight
 And to the rescue came.
 O wisest love! that flesh and blood
 Which did in Adam fail,
 Should strive afresh against their foe,
 Should strive and should prevail;
 And that a higher gift than grace
 Should flesh and blood refine,
 God's Presence and His very Self,
 And Essence all-divine.
 O generous love! that He who smote
 In man for man the foe,
 The double agony in man
 For man should undergo;
 And in the garden secretly,
 And on the cross on high,
 Should teach His brethren and inspire
 To suffer and to die.
 Praise to the Holiest in the height,
 And in the depth be praise:
 In all His words most wonderful;
 Most sure in all His ways!

Angel

Thy judgment now is near, for we are come
 Into the veiled presence of our God.

Soul

I hear the voices that I left on earth.



Angel

It is the voice of friends around thy bed,
 Who say the "Subvenite" with the priest.
 Hither the echoes come; before the Throne
 Stands the great Angel of the Agony,
 The same who strengthen'd Him, what time He knelt
 Lone in that garden shade, bedew'd with blood.
 That Angel best can plead with Him for all
 Tormented souls, the dying and the dead.

Angel of the Agony

Jesu! by that shuddering dread which fell on Thee;
 Jesu! by that cold dismay which sicken'd Thee;
 Jesu! by that pang of heart which thrill'd in Thee;
 Jesu! by that mount of sins which crippled Thee;
 Jesu! by that sense of guilt which stifled Thee;
 Jesu! by that innocence which girdled Thee;
 Jesu! by that sanctity which reign'd in Thee;
 Jesu! by that Godhead which was one with Thee;
 Jesu! spare these souls which are so dear to Thee,
 [Souls] who in prison, calm and patient, wait for Thee;
 Hasten, Lord, their hour, and bid them come to Thee,
 To that glorious Home, where they shall ever gaze on Thee.

Soul

I go before my Judge.

Voices of Assistants on Earth

Be merciful, be gracious; spare him, Lord.
 Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver him.

Angel

Praise to His Name!
 O happy, suffering soul! for it is safe,
 Consumed, yet quicken'd, by the glance of God.
 Alleluia! Praise to His Name!

Soul

Take me away, and in the lowest deep
 There let me be,
 And there in hope the lone night-watches keep,
 Told out for me.
 There, motionless and happy in my pain,
 Lone, not forlorn —
 There will I sing my sad perpetual strain,
 Until the morn.
 There will I sing, and soothe my stricken breast,
 Which ne'er can cease

To throb, and pine, and languish, till possess
 Of its Sole Peace.
 There will I sing my absent Lord and Love: —
 Take me away,
 That sooner I may rise, and go above,
 And see Him in the truth of everlasting day.

Souls in Purgatory

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge; in every generation;
 Before the hills were born, and the world was: from age to age Thou art God.
 Bring us not, Lord, very low: for Thou hast said, Come back again, ye sons of Adam.
 Come back, O Lord! how long: and be entreated for Thy servants.

Angel

Softly and gently, dearly-ransom'd soul,
 In my most loving arms I now enfold thee,
 And o'er the penal waters, as they roll,
 I poise thee, and I lower thee, and hold thee.
 And carefully I dip thee in the lake,
 And thou, without a sob or a resistance,
 Dost through the flood thy rapid passage take,
 Sinking deep, deeper, into the dim distance.
 Angels, to whom the willing task is given,
 Shall tend, and nurse, and lull thee, as thou liest;
 And Masses on the earth, and prayers in heaven,
 Shall aid thee at the throne of the Most Highest.
 Farewell, but not for ever! brother dear,
 Be brave and patient on thy bed of sorrow;
 Swiftly shall pass thy night of trial here,
 And I will come and wake thee on the morrow.
 Farewell. Farewell.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
 And in the depth be praise:
 To us His elder race He gave
 To battle and to win,
 Without the chastisement of pain,
 Without the soil of sin.
 Amen.